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CRITIQUE OF TRAINING COURSE ON

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS ABROAD

INTRODUCTION

1. From 30 March through 28 April 1959 I participated in the initial running of a new Office of Training Course entitled "Personal Effectiveness Abroad." Thirteen "student-consultants", twelve of whom had had rather extensive overseas experience, shared in the venture. Our purpose was to help the Office of Training shape a training course to improve the effectiveness of CIA employees in:

- a. dealing with persons of other cultures and
- b. adjusting to living in foreign societies.

2. The decision to develop such a course (the elements of which the Language and Area School had been mulling over for some time) was triggered by [REDACTED] Chief of Operations in the Office of the Deputy Director (Plans). He was present at our first session and told of his growing concern with the need for CIA personnel to become more effective in communicating with persons of other cultures (in his example - Japanese). His remarks also reflected concern with problems of employee and family adjustment to life in foreign environments.

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PLAN OF THE COURSE

3. The initial offering of this course was, in the Office of Training's language, "a pilot study in which the classroom is a laboratory for examining the problems and possible answers" to effective adjustment to a foreign environment. Hence, the schedule (copy attached) was not intended as a finished product. Rather, it offered a sort of smorgasbord of subjects and approaches from which selections can be made and shaped into more compact schedules for future presentation.

4. Members of the class were divided into three panels and given specific assignments during the critique phase of the course:

Panel 1 -- Determine criteria to be applied in selecting persons for overseas service.

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Panel 2 -- Evaluate extent to which formal training can enhance those characteristics which make for effectiveness abroad.

Panel 3 -- Recommend training courses and methods the Office of Training should employ to increase effectiveness of CIA personnel in overseas areas.

Panel presentations were made orally. I served with Panel 2 and a copy of the outline used in our presentation is attached.

5. The class met half days for four and a half weeks. Included in this period was a three-day stay [REDACTED] during the final phase of the course.

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OBSERVATIONS

THE BASIC PROBLEM

6. Certainly for me, no conclusion emerged more clearly from this course than the conviction that training in "overseasmanship" is a "must" for CIA. And the training should extend to every person of age we send abroad -- dependents as well as employees. The exact form and duration of such training should depend on the needs of the individual "student." The range ought to include:

- a. an intensive, formal course for JOT's and other selected professional employees who have not had significant overseas service;
- b. a seminar type of course for senior professionals;
- c. a strong dose of "overseasmanship" in language and area courses;
- d. a diffusion of "overseasmanship" in all other Office of Training training that is field oriented;
- e. do-it-yourself kits -- especially for dependents who are not able to attend area courses or who want to supplement such training.

THE PILOT COURSE

7. In general, I thought the pilot course was well planned for the purpose intended and was very well presented. Certainly, I enjoyed it immensely myself and found it most beneficial. Using it as a starting point for a formal, basic course on

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"Overseasmanship", I would make the following principal suggestions:

- a. Design the course for two weeks full time.
- b. Reduce the number of guest speakers and non-CIA panelists so that almost all lectures are given by the Office of Training staff members and most of the panelists are CIA employees.
- c. Insure that panelists are carefully oriented and, preferably, rehearsed. Their presentations should be rather firmly directed by the Instructor so that they will be well paced and stay on target. (This is intended more for emphasis than for criticism since our panels, on the whole, were quite good.)
- d. Eliminate from the course any concentration on specific foreign cultures. This belongs in area studies. Refer to specific cultures only for illustrations or for situational presentations.
- e. Increase the use of situational presentations and problems. These can be highly effective, particularly when a skilled commentator joins in each skit to explain the significance of what is taking place.
- f. Test and evaluate the students. Omit evaluations and students relax.
- g. Furnish students a carefully developed reading list and give them a point of reference for use after the course is concluded. "Overseasmanship" is a subject of considerable interest to all CIA people. After they have obtained a basic understanding of the problem and have developed some techniques for dealing with it, they will readily continue their study if properly guided and stimulated.

FINALE

8. When the pilot course ended, two other "students" and I were asked to work with the staff in developing some conclusions about the course and in preparing specific recommendations for the Director of Training. This chore, which we are about to conclude, has given me a full opportunity to express my views on the course and the subject in general.

9. The Director of Training also asked me to pull together those reactions of the class, particularly as evidenced by the conclusions of the three student panels,

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which may be of interest to the Career Council or others from a management point of view. These reactions include:

- a. Criteria to be applied in selecting employees for overseas service.
- b. Need for Station Chiefs and field supervisors at all levels to be informed about and alert to problems of "overseasmanship."
- c. Desirability of arranging area study courses, especially for dependents, at overseas stations -- probably along the lines followed by

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- d. Need for official records (Fitness Reports, medical records, etc.) to reflect more complete information about employees' (and their families') effectiveness abroad for use in selecting individuals for future field assignments.

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Attachments:

Tab A - Schedule

Tab B - Outline of Panel 2